
STATING AN OPINION: WORLD OCEANS DAY

LEVEL

Intermediate–Advanced

GOALS

- Learn about the importance of the world's oceans
- Learn about World Oceans Day on June 8
- Develop writing skills through writing an op-ed article

MATERIALS

- *Stating An Opinion: World Oceans Day* lesson plan
- [World Oceans Day official website](#)
- [Celebrate World Oceans Day video](#)
- This lesson plan, which includes the *World Oceans Day: Word Search*, *World Oceans Day Reading*, and the *Op-Ed Outline Template*

PREPARATION

- 1) Read the *Op-Ed Phrase Sheet* before class to see how facts and opinions are used in writing an op-ed essay in English.
- 2) Print the *World Oceans Day: Word Search* worksheet. At least one copy per group is needed, preferably one copy per student.
- 3) Print the *World Oceans Day Reading*, preferably one copy per student.
- 4) Print the *Op-Ed Outline Template*. One copy per group is needed, preferably one per student.
- 5) Load the [Celebrate World Oceans Day](#) video prior to class.
- 6) An op-ed is a page of a newspaper where opinions are expressed by individuals on a topic they are concerned about. The goal of this lesson is to help students learn English opinion phrases by writing an op-ed piece about saving the oceans. This style of writing is also common in American university classes in which students learn how to support opinion with fact.

PROCEDURES

- 1) Begin the lesson by activating student schema. Ask the class what makes oceans important.
- 2) To warm up, watch the [Celebrate World Oceans Day](#) video. Students can use the video's facts in their op-ed essays. Replay the video if needed so students can write down the facts in the video.
- 3) Give each student (or group) a copy of *World Oceans Day* reading. Have the class read silently or have student take turns reading the passage aloud.
- 4) Give each student (or group) a copy of *World Oceans Day* word search. Words in **bold** can be found in the word search.
- 5) In groups or individually, have the students solve the word search.
- 6) Review the word search vocabulary as a class. The facts can be used for their opinion essays.
- 7) Using the facts from the three sources, have the students fill out their *Op-Ed Template* to create an op-ed piece to send to the [American English Facebook](#) page.

ADAPT IT TO YOUR CLASS

- If students struggle with the material, have the class write short opinion-only paragraphs instead of an op-ed that uses the facts from the class activities.

WORLD OCEANS DAY: WORD SEARCH

B	P	I	Y	T	N	E	V	E	S	E	T	N	G	P
L	R	R	V	T	U	R	T	L	E	S	C	F	D	X
U	R	M	O	C	I	F	I	C	A	P	V	W	Y	D
E	D	J	U	I	N	O	I	L	L	I	B	Q	B	T
W	C	K	G	T	W	A	B	I	C	D	J	H	E	O
H	N	F	K	N	H	I	G	H	S	E	A	S	M	O
A	Y	O	Y	A	Q	C	I	T	S	A	L	P	R	I
L	T	W	I	L	L	D	E	R	O	L	P	X	E	S
E	D	E	V	T	I	I	Z	A	Q	S	J	S	K	Y
S	N	J	F	A	U	Y	O	N	G	C	X	B	P	R
B	L	A	Q	E	H	L	W	S	R	Q	O	S	M	F
O	K	P	X	Q	R	U	L	P	J	M	F	D	G	G
N	K	G	H	N	K	I	L	O	M	E	T	E	R	S
M	O	R	E	T	A	W	D	R	P	T	C	K	K	A
Z	A	P	D	F	M	F	Y	T	I	R	B	L	Y	N

Word Search Sentences

1. Around **seventy** percent of the Earth's surface is covered by oceans.
2. The largest ocean on Earth is the **Pacific** Ocean; it covers around 30% of the Earth.
3. Eighty percent of all **pollution** in the oceans is from land-based activities.
4. More than **one billion** people depend on the ocean for their primary source of food.
5. **Plastic** waste kills up to 1 million sea birds each year.
6. The **High Seas** is the name for areas of the ocean beyond national borders.
7. Oceans are used as a means of **transport** to move products from city to city.
8. **Blue whales** are the largest animal ever to live on the planet.
9. The second largest ocean is the **Atlantic** Ocean; it covers 21% of the Earth's surface.
10. Ocean **turtles** can grow to the size of a small car.
11. More than 97% of our entire planet's **water** is contained in the ocean.
12. Less than 10% of the oceans have been **explored** by humans.
13. An average of 600,000 barrels of **oil** a year is spilled from ships into the ocean.
14. The populations of large fish, such as tuna, **cod**, and swordfish, have declined by 90%.
15. The average depth of the world's oceans is 4.18 **kilometers**.

* Ocean facts from noaa.gov and worldoceansday.org

WORLD OCEANS DAY: WORD SEARCH ANSWER KEY

B	P	I	Y	T	N	E	V	E	S	E	T	N	G	P
L	R	R	V	T	U	R	T	L	E	S	C	F	D	X
U	R	M	O	C	I	F	I	C	A	P	V	W	Y	D
E	D	J	U	I	N	O	I	L	L	I	B	Q	B	T
W	C	K	G	T	W	A	B	I	C	D	J	H	E	O
H	N	F	K	N	H	I	G	H	S	E	A	S	M	O
A	Y	O	Y	A	Q	C	I	T	S	A	L	P	R	I
L	T	W	I	L	L	D	E	R	O	L	P	X	E	S
E	D	E	V	T	I	I	Z	A	Q	S	J	S	K	Y
S	N	J	F	A	U	Y	O	N	G	C	X	B	P	R
B	L	A	Q	E	H	L	W	S	R	Q	O	S	M	F
O	K	P	X	Q	R	U	L	P	J	M	F	D	G	G
N	K	G	H	N	K	I	L	O	M	E	T	E	R	S
M	O	R	E	T	A	W	D	R	P	T	C	K	K	A
Z	A	P	D	F	M	F	Y	T	I	R	B	L	Y	N

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The World's Oceans and Coasts

The world's oceans cover 74 percent of the earth. They are home to more than 80 percent of all the living **organisms** on the planet. Oceans are **vital** to life on Earth.

Most ocean life lives along the world's coasts. Three billion people – about half of the world's population – live in coastal areas. Fishermen around the world catch more than 99 percent of their fish less than 200 miles (320 kilometers) from **shore**.

These days, coastal populations around the world are increasing. Buildings and roads are replacing natural **habitats**. Pollution is destroying fish and other **wildlife**. More **sewage** and **toxic** waste are running into coastal waters. More plastics and other forms of trash are ending up on beaches and in coastal waters.

Compared to the coastal areas, the open ocean is fairly clean. Most ocean pollution comes from shipping activities or from the **atmosphere**, but there is a lot of litter. Plastic items such as bottles and food containers wash down rivers, enter the ocean, and can even be found in faraway Antarctica. These plastics not only destroy the beauty of beaches, but they kill fish, birds, **seals**, and other animals. The major source of this ocean plastic pollution is human activities on land.

*taken from [Language and Civil Society e-journal by Susan Stempleski](#)

OP-ED PHRASE SHEET

Many newspapers or news websites contain an op-ed section. This section gives people a public space to voice concerns they have on an issue that affects their town, state, or even country. A good op-ed piece supports the opinions of the author with facts from sources such as reports, news articles, or books. The ability to use facts from many sources to support an idea or opinion is very important in American English writing. This use of sources to support an idea is the foundation of the writing students do in American universities as well.

Using this sheet, help your students take facts from the [Celebrate World Oceans Day](#) video, the *World Oceans Day* reading sheet, and the *World Oceans Day* word search and use them to support their own opinion. This writing exercise will give them valuable practice in English writing structures.

Claim	Fact	Opinion Phrase	Opinion
Oceans help feed many people.	Philippe Cousteau states that one billion people rely on the ocean for their daily food.	I strongly believe ...	that we must protect this important source of food.
We all rely on the oceans.	According to the Celebrate World Oceans Day video, oceans provide a majority of our oxygen.	In my opinion ...	when we save the oceans, we protect the air we breathe.
Our litter on land hurts the ocean.	The website NOAA.gov writes that plastic waste kills one million sea birds a year.	It seems to me that ...	if we stop pollution on land, we can also save the oceans

Useful Opinion Phrases

The following phrases in **bold** can be used to introduce facts from a source:

- **According to the** World Oceans Day website ...
- The NOAA.gov website **writes that** ...
- Philippe Cousteau **states that** ...

Useful Opinion Phrases

The following phrases can be used to introduce the author's opinion:

- I think ...
- As far as I'm concerned ...
- I strongly believe ...
- According to ...
- It seems to me that ...
- In my opinion ...
- From my point of view ...
- As far as I understand / can see ...

OP-ED OUTLINE: TEMPLATE

Introduction:	
Fact	Opinion
Conclusion:	

OP-ED OUTLINE: EXAMPLE

Introduction: The oceans are important to us all, and together we have the power to protect the oceans. This year on World Oceans Day, we must all act because the oceans are a part of all our lives. I believe we must all protect the oceans.	
Fact	Opinion
Oceans help feed many people. Philippe Cousteau states that one billion people rely on the ocean for their daily food.	I strongly believe that we must protect this important source of food so everyone can get the food they need.
Also, we all rely on the oceans. According to the Celebrate World Oceans Day video, oceans provide a majority of our oxygen.	It seems to me that if we destroy the oceans, we also damage the air we breathe.
Finally, our litter on land hurts ocean life. The website NOAA.gov writes that plastic waste kills one million sea birds a year.	I think that if we stop pollution on land we can also save ocean life such as birds and fish.
Conclusion: If we all act together to save the oceans, we can protect a valuable food source for billions of people, protect the oxygen we breathe, and save the plants and animals that call the ocean home. This year on World Oceans Day, I will protect the oceans by cleaning litter near my home and school, and I encourage you to do the same.	